DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 119 739 IR 003 218

AUTHOR Ebbin, Arthur
TITLE Access to N.Y.S. Publications: Summary of a Questionnaire Survey.
PUB DATE 20 Jun 75
NOTE 14p.; Best copy available

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS *Depository Libraries; *Government Publications; Library Acquisition; Library Collections; *Library Surveys; Library Technical Processes; State Government; *Use Studies
IDENTIFIERS *New York

ABSTRACT

Librarians at 17 New York public and academic libraries designated as depositories for New York State publications were surveyed to obtain information on such depository practices as acquisition, shelf arrangement, bibliographical access, and processing time. Information was sought on estimated document use and value, and various aspects of the state depository system were evaluated. Results are summarized in 13 tables. The survey questionnaire is included. (Author/NF)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED119739

ACCESS TO N.Y.S. PUBLICATIONS: SUMMARY OF A QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

prepared by
Arthur Ebbin
Assistant Librarian, Nassau Library System

November 12, 1974
Rev. 6/20/75

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This summary of a questionnaire survey, of librarians, at 17 public and academic libraries designated depositories for N.Y.S. publications, contains information concerning depository practices, impressions of document use and value, and evaluations of various aspects of the state depository system.

Public and academic depository libraries were surveyed in the belief that these libraries are of special importance, because of the large and varied group of users which they serve. Other types of depository libraries were excluded, in order to keep the survey within manageable bounds.[1]

Respondents*

Table 1 - Depositories Surveyed [2]

	Public		Academic	
	Full	Selective	Full	Selective
Depositories in N.Y.S.	13	18	20	9
Depositories sent questionnaires	12	4	11	2
Percentage sent questionnaires	92%	22%	55%	22%
Respondents (useable replies) [3]	6	4	5	2
Percentage of useable replies relative to depositories sent questionnaires	50%	100%	45%	100%
Percentage of useable replies relative to depositories in N.Y.S.	46%	22%	25%	22%

Although the original plan was to survey only full depositories, the replies of 6 selective depositories are included in this summary. Note 4 attempts to explain this ambiguity.[4]

Table 2 - Respondents by categories

Public (full)	Academic (full)	Selective
1 sm.	1 mod.	2 colleges (1 mod. & 1 med.)
2 mod.	2 med.	1 mod. & 1 med. (Public)
3 large	2 large	2 large (Public)

---

* If this summary is found useful, it is largely due to those librarians kind enough to cooperate. The questionnaires were mailed in late April and most replies were received by the middle of June.

JR003 418

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

This document was processed for the ERIC Document Reproduction Service by the ERIC Clearinghouse at Stanford. We are aware that some pages probably will not be readable in microfiche or in Hardcopy form. However, this is the best available copy, and we feel that the document should not be withheld from interested readers on the basis of these unreadable pages alone.

The American Library Directory (1972-1973 ed.) has been used to determine size holdings, and the following categories have been used for size: 0-100,000 volumes=small (sm.); 100-300,000 volumes=moderate (mod.); 300-700,000 volumes=medium (med.); and over 700,000 volumes=large. Thus, if a central library (including branches) has over 300,000 volumes, it is considered medium size.

PART I - DEPOSITORY PRACTICES

Acquisition

Non-depository publications are acquired from the Gift & Exchange Section of the N.Y.S. Library and issuing agencies by purchase, subscription, request and unrequested gift. They are far more numerous than depository publications.*

Table 3 - Depository and non-depository publications indicated in the monthly issues of the 1973 and 1974 Checklist

	1973	1974 (Jan.-Aug.)
Depository	under 100	under 90
Non-depository	over 1600**	over 1000

Table 4 - Estimates of non-depository publications acquired last year***

Public (full)	Academic (full)	Selective
1. sm. - 0	1. mod. - 200	1. coll. - 200
2. med. - 50	2. med. - 350 serial monographs?	2. coll.-not known
3. mod. - 200	3. med. - 800	3. PL mod. - no reply
4. large - 400	4. large - 250	4. PL med. - 82
5. large - not known	5. large - 330****	5. PL large - 400
6. large - not known		6. PL large - not known

Shelf Arrangement

Most libraries shelve their publications in more than one collection. The summary tables below indicate how depositories shelve most of their publications.

---

* Depository documents are mostly serial in nature. They include documents in the numbered legislative series, annual reports of the departments, boards and commissions, and "certain other publications."[5]

** The 1973 figures for non-depository publications is inflated due to multiple listing of periodicals.

*** At least one depository receives all N.Y.S. publications available on microfilm. (Document arrangement is by Checklist number, and access is via the Checklist.)

**** Acquired 1972/73.

Table 5a - Depository publications

	Regular Collect.	Pamphlets/ Vertical File	Document Coll.
Public (full)			
sm.			1
mod.		1	1
large	2		1
Academic (full)			
mod.			1
med.			2
large	2		
Selective			
Coll.	1		1
PL mod. - med.		1	1
PL large.	1		1

Table 5b - Non-depository publications

	Regular Collect.	Pamphlets/ Vertical file	Document Coll.
Public (full)			
mod.		2	
large	1	1	1
Academic (full)			
mod.			1
med.			2
large	2		
Selective			
Coll.	1		1
PL mod. - med.		2	
PL large	1		1

With one exception, only large libraries shelve most of their documents with the regular collection.

Shelf arrangement for a document collection

Six libraries use the agency keyword system,* while a 7th shelves its documents by inverted entry (i.e., N.Y. (State) Commerce Dept.) and title entry.

Table 6 - Evaluation of Key word (and inverted entry) system

	Effective	Adequate	Adequate with Reservations	Inadequate	NO Reply
Public (full)					
mod.			1		
Academic (full)					
mod.					1
med.	1			1	
large			1		
Selective					
Coll.	1				
PL large			1		

* At least one depository sub-arranges documents chronologically.

A respondent finding the system effective commented: "We do not have such a large collection that it requires more than Keyword placement." Comments of respondents finding the system less than adequate included "difficult to use" and "too many name changes (and) insufficient subject access."

Other systems of shelf arrangement include:
(1) Dewey classification (mainly for serial depository documents), and
(2) an agency class number (broad Dewey) - subject heading arrangement, i.e., 330L - Housing.

Bibliographical access

Table 7a - Depository publications

	Catalog all or most	Some or few	None	Kardex Record	Index/Cataloging System
Public (full)					
sm.					1
mod.		2			
large	2				1
Academic (full)					
mod.		1			
med.		1	1	1	
large	2			1	
Selective					
Coll.	1	1			
PL mod.-med.	1		1		
PL large		1	1		

Table 7b - Non-depository publications

	Catalog all or most	Some or few	None	Kardex Record	Index/Cataloging System
Public (full)					
mod.		2			
large	1	1			1
Academic (full)					
mod.			1		
med.		1	1	1	
large	2			1	
Selective					
Coll.	1	1			
PL mod. - med.			2		
PL large	1		1		

With one exception, only large libraries catalog most of their non-depository documents.

Processing

The question concerning cataloging or indexing system included a poorly defined request for an "estimate of processing time required, i.e., professional and clerical hours an average month." 4 libraries were able to provide estimates.

Table 8 - Access and processing time[6]

Type depos. library and # non-depos. doc. 1973	Shelf arrangement	Cataloging or indexing	Hours month	Hours year
1. PL-large full not known	document coll.	Index system (agency & subj. cards; brief bibl. data)	25 prof.	300 prof.
2. PL-large full 400	regular coll. (depos.) pamphlet coll. (most non-depos.)	depos. (all) non-depos. (some)	10 prof. 30 cler.	120 prof. 360 cler.
3. College selective 200	document coll. (most) regular coll. (some)	some	30 prof. 30 cler.	360 prof. 360 cler.
4. PL-med selective 82	document coll. (all depos. & some non-depos.) pamphlet coll. (some)	depos. (all)	7	84

The considerable disparity in processing time between library 4 and the others is perhaps due to several reasons:

(a) Library 4 is a selective depository and catalogs its depository documents as serials.

(b) Library 4 acquires relatively few non-depository documents.

(c) The other libraries catalog some or index all of their non-serial documents; i.e., one of the librarians commented: "the biggest headache, though, is the length of time it takes LC cataloging to come through."

Use of the Checklist for local access

Tables 9 and 10 indicate that a number of depositories use the Checklist as a means of access to locally held documents. The one library to rate the Checklist effective for this purpose, however, is currently cataloging and indexing its collection.

Table 9 - Reply to question: "do you use the Checklist as a means of access to documents in your own collection?"

	No	Yes
Public (full)	2	4
Academic (full)	2	3
Selective	4	2

Table 10 - Evaluation of the Checklist as a means of access to locally held documents.

	Effective	Adequate	Adequate with Reservations	Inadequate
Public (full				
sm.	1			
mod.			1	
large			2	
Academic (full)				
mod.		1		
med.			1	
large				1
Selective				
PL large			2	

Reasons mentioned for dissatisfaction with the Checklist included: (1) lack of a subject index, (2) delay in cumulations, i.e. as of November 1974, 32 monthly issues lack cumulation, (3) inadequate cross references, i.e. "Will someone please catalog documents the way people know them from the press? eg. Scott Commission.", and (4) delay in monthly issues.

PART II - USE AND VALUE OF COLLECTION

Although few libraries maintain statistics of use, 9 librarians were willing to provide impressions, which are summarized below.

Table 11 - Impressions of use

Public (full)	
mod.	"minimal" "marginal" use
large	"moderate" "approx. 10 circulations per month"
Academic (full)	
mod.	"seldom used"
med.	"being heavily used"
Selective	
coll.	"not heavily used"
PL med.	"4 or 5 requests a month at most"
PL large	"becoming more used"

7 librarians made no specific reply to the question on use, and an 8th may have been speaking for some of the others in replying "impossible to say."

Types of users mentioned included students, faculty, politically oriented adults, professionals (mainly educational group), government officials, people running for office and newly elected officials.

Table 12 - Assessment of value

	Important	Useful	Moderately useful	Little value
Public (full)				
sm.				1
mod.	1			1
large	1	1	1	
Academic (full)				
mod.			1	
med.	1	1		
large	1	1		
Selective				
coll.			1	1
PL mod.-med.			1	1
PL large	1	1		

The relationship between access (or lack of access) and use or value was referred to by 2 respondents. One respondent who rated the documents important commented: "use is marginal because of the lack of adequate bibliographical control." A respondent who rated the documents of little value added the explanatory comment: "since they were not available to the public." This library is presently cataloging and indexing its documents and shelving them in a special collection.

Other factors related to use or value are no doubt number and type of patrons generally served, size of document collection, and need for communication of holdings; i.e., a respondent at a public library commented: "more effort should be made to acquaint patrons at local libraries with materials available from the state."

Table 13 - Special efforts made to promote use of documents

1. Reference service
2. Special cataloging
3. Single copies of heavily used documents are made special reference, available on request
4. Notification of departmental libraries
5. Displays and bulletin boards
6. Community talks and local newspaper column
7. Mentioned in library instruction classes and seminars

NOTES

1. Other types of libraries designated depositories include educational (i.e., community colleges and specialized schools), legal, governmental and legislative.
2. Figures are based on the 1971 Checklist as modified by replies of libraries surveyed.
3. A respondent at a small academic library, designated a full depository, replied with a brief note, stating the library does not have many state documents, and those it does have, are stored on the shelves, in boxes, labeled subject-wise. Though this reply was not incorporated into the summary, it is noteworthy, since other small depository libraries may follow similar practices.
4. Four libraries, listed as full depositories in the 1971 Checklist, replied they were selective. One librarian explained, "the official N.Y.S. depository is in another location entirely," (i.e., a special branch library), "N.Y.S. documents are distributed from that check-point." The main library thus considers itself a selective depository.
   The 3 other replies may be due to several reasons:
   (a) The term "full depository" (though it is used in the 1971 Checklist) may have been misinterpreted.
   (b) Uncertainty about depository status.
   (c) The listings in the Checklist may need revision or be incorrect.
   In addition, one selective depository received a questionnaire due to a mistake in mailing address; the other was surveyed intentionally.
5. N.Y.S. Library, Gift & Exchange, "Plan for depositories of N.Y.S. publications," 1p. undated.
6. Processing time at library 4 includes shelflist entering, book-plates, stamping and Checklist searching for citation.

Addenda - Evaluations of various aspects of the state depository system.

Availability of depository publications

Table 13 summarizes librarian replies to the question: "Would you like to see the number of depository documents available.....considerably increase, moderately increase.....?"

Table A1 - Availability of depository publications

	Consid. Increase	Mod. Increase	Remain the same	Decrease	No Reply
Public (full)					
sm.		1			
mod.		1		1	
large	1	1			1
Academic (full)					
mod.			1		
med.	2				
large	2				
Selective					
coll.	1	1			
PL mod.-med.		1			1
PL large	1	1			

Comments of respondents favoring an increase related to:

1. Number of documents available,
2. The need for an updating of documents available, i.e., "There never seems to be an addition of any new titles," and
3. Types of documents desired.[1]

The[2] respondents opposed to an increase elsewhere cited lack of use. In one library use is "minimal"; in the other documents are "seldom used."

One librarian who did not reply commented: "prefer selective depository system as used by U.S. Government."

Acquisition of publications from agencies.

Most non-depository publications are available from issuing agencies only. One respondent commented: "If the only way to get annual (and other periodically issued) reports from the various N.Y.S. departments is to get them as depository items, then perhaps they should be made depository titles. It is frustrating to have to write year after year to each department for its annual report. There seems to be no such thing as a mailing list maintained for more than one year!"

Another librarian commented (concerning publications available from agencies): "would like to order all publications by Checklist number." Presently full bibliographical data is required, (i.e., Education Dept. Bur. of Occupational Education Research. "Significant job facts found in work study programs in 5 major N.Y.S. cities." July, 1967. (1974) 323 p. mimeo).

The Checklist

The Checklist is a monthly agency listing of N.Y.S. publications with subsequent annual and quinquennial cumulations. It is used at depositories and non-depositories, by librarians and patrons, for selection, acquisition, reference, and inter-library loan via the state library. Libraries receiving N.Y.S. publications on microfilm are especially dependent on the Checklist, since document arrangement is by Checklist number.

Table A2 - Evaluation of the Checklist as a means of access to state documents.

	Effective	Adequate	Adequate with Reservations	Inadequate	No Reply
Public (full)					
sm.	1				
mod.		1		1	
large		1	1	1	
Academic (full)					
mod.		1			
med.			1	1	
large			1	1	
Selective					
coll.		1		1	
PL mod.-med.			1		1
PL large	1		1		

Comments concerning the Checklist included:

1. "How about more cumulations?" (The lack of a 1972 annual index is perhaps due to a decision to directly incorporate the 1972 monthly issues into the quinquennial, (1968-1973). As of November 1974, 32 monthly issues lack cumulation.)
2. "Will someone please catalog documents the way people know them from the press? eg. Scott Commission."
3. "Would like to see a more comprehensive list."
4. "Should be more coordination between listing and distribution."
5. "It's late."
6. "The new method of handling periodical entries is helpful--likewise the address list."

An index for the Checklist

Access to documents in the Checklist is by issuing agency.

Table A3 - Reply to question: Would you like to see a selective or full index in the Checklist?

	No	Yes	No reply
Public (full)	1	5	
Academic (full)		5	
Selective		4	2

Table A4 - Full vs selective index

	Full	Selective	Didn't Specify
Public (full)	3	1	1
Academic (full)	4		1
Selective	4		

Comments of librarians favoring an index included:

1. "Subject approach would make these documents so much more useful.....if you can't catalog all items."
2. "Agency Keyword system is limited. For example, urban conditions are handled by many different agencies.....(The index should ideally be something like the Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications, with frequent cumulations."
3. "We use (the Checklist) as a selection guide. It is very inadequate, lacking indexes for monthly issue."
4. "There should be an author (personal), title, and subject index for current issues as well as title and subject indexes for the backrun."

---

[1]Comments concerning types of documents desired included:

1. "Areas of current awareness such as environment, cable television, and specific educational issues, might be included in depository documents. These are the items most asked for."
2. "Would like to see more publishing in vital areas such as weekly Senate and Assembly Journals with vote records. The N.Y.S. Legislative Record and Index .....should be made available free to one depository library in each county or library system."

SURVEY OF NEW YORK STATE DEPOSITORY LIBRARIES

Library Name _____

Type of Library _____
(public, college, university, other)

Type of Depository full selective

When did library become a depository? _____

A. Holdings (non-depository documents)

1. Approximately how many non-depository N.Y.S. documents did library acquire last year? _____

2. How were they acquired?

3. Would you like to see the number of documents available to depository libraries: considerably increased_____ moderately increased_____ remain the same_____ decrease_____ other_____?

Comments:

B. Access

1. Are your N.Y.S. depository documents kept together as a special collection?_____

Comments:

2. How are depository documents arranged on the shelf?

3. If you use the agency keyword system, do you find it: effective_____ adequate_____ adequate with reservations _____ inadequate_____ other_____?

Comments:

4. Are depository documents indexed or cataloged?_____
If yes, describe the indexing or cataloging system used. Include an estimate of processing time required, i.e. number of professional or clerical hours an average month.

5. Are your non-depository N.Y.S. documents kept together with the depository collection?_____

If yes, are they indexed or cataloged?_____

If no, how are they shelved and made accessible?_____

6. How would you rate A Checklist of Official Publications of the State of N. Y. as a means of access to N.Y.S. publications in general? Effective_____ adequate_____ adequate with reservations_____inadequate_____other_____?

Comments:

7. Would you like to see a selective or full index in the Checklist?_____(yes, no)_____(selective, full)

Comments:

8. Do you use the Checklist, as a means of access to documents in your collection?_____

If yes, how would you rate the Checklist for this purpose? effective_____adequate_____adequate with reservations_____ inadequate_____ other_____.

Comments:

9. What bibliographical publications, if any, aside from the Checklist do you use for access to documents in your collection?

C. Use and value of N.Y.S. documents

1. Do you have any statistics or impressions concerning quantity of use?

2. What kinds of patrons use documents? Are they usually looking for specific documents?

Or general subject information?

3. How would you assess the value of the collection? Important_____ useful____moderately useful_____little value_____other_____.

4. Does the library make special efforts to promote use of N.Y.S. documents? If yes, please describe.